

Neil Lennon declines to discuss Anthony Stokes 'rumour' ahead of Edinburgh derby



Hibs' Head coach Neil Lennon declined to discuss the rumour that Anthony Stokes was leaving the club following an incident at the club's winter break training camp and would not be drawn on whether the striker was in contention for tomorrow's Scottish Cup tie against Hearts.

Instead he wanted to concentrate on the game as he believes that the competition which Hibs won in 2016 is their only realistic prospect of silverware this season.

Speaking ahead of the clash Lennon said: "We played brilliantly at Easter Road to beat them 3-1 but the game recently was down to the condition of the pitch, it wasn't conducive to playing good football and we may have to face that again come Sunday.

"I want to come out of the game in the next round of the draw and if we have to fight for it, scrap for it or play football for it then that's what we'll have to do.

"It's important because it's the cup, there's a real threat of going out early and we don't want that to happen.

"It's probably our last real opportunity of winning a trophy and it's against our local rivals for the third year in a row. We're all looking forward to it, I think the players are ready, they've had a good break and I think they're just chomping at the bit to get out and play.

“There’s no question that 2017 was a great year for the club, we had a couple of great wins and great performances and have been pretty consistent. We’re playing a good style of football and we are looking to build on that.

“Nothing changes because of the turn of the year, the season is still in flow and I don’t think the break should affect the players too much. It will have rejuvenated them and we’re just looking for more of the same.”